

## LESSON 7: THE U.S. COAST GUARD AND U.S. MERCHANT MARINE



*amalgamation  
barrage balloons  
beacons  
buoys  
cutter  
ensign  
gross tonnage  
letters of marque  
liberty ships  
pilotage  
privateers  
scuttling  
subsidies  
surfboats  
tenders*



### INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Coast Guard is the nation's oldest and premier maritime agency. The history of the Service is very complicated because it is the **amalgamation** of five federal agencies:

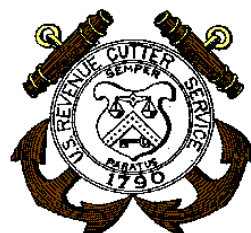
- ❑ U.S. Lighthouse Service
- ❑ Revenue **Cutter** Service
- ❑ Steamboat Inspection Service
- ❑ U.S. Lifesaving Service
- ❑ Bureau of Navigation

These agencies were originally independent; however, because they had overlapping responsibilities, the government moved them around until Congress finally united them under the umbrella of the Coast Guard (see the *chronology* below). The multiple missions and responsibilities of the modern Coast Guard are directly tied to this diverse heritage. Members of the Coast Guard have fought in every war of the United States. The present active duty complement is slightly over 37,000 personnel, making the Coast Guard the smallest armed force. The New York City police force is larger than the active duty United States Coast Guard.

### BACKGROUND

Several acts of America's young government in 1789 were to provide for aids to navigation, ensure that tariffs were not avoided, protect shipping from pirates, and intercept contraband (or stop smuggling). On August 7, 1789, the First Congress of the United States federalized the existing lighthouses built by the colonies and appropriated funds for the building of more lighthouses, **beacons**, and **buoys**.

### CHRONOLOGY



#### August 1790

On August 4, 1790 (now the official birthday of the Coast Guard), Congress created a service under the Treasury Department to enforce customs laws. This service was alternately known as the system of cutters, Revenue Service, and Revenue-Marine. It was

officially named the Revenue Cutter Service in 1863.

#### August 1852- February 1903

The Steamboat Inspection Service was established to protect the lives of passengers on vessels propelled by steam, and was operated under the Justice Department. It was placed under the Treasury Department in August 1852. In July 1884, Congress established the Bureau of Navigation to provide for the safe operation of vessels on federal waterways and placed it under the Treasury Department. In February 1903, Congress created the Department of Commerce and Labor and transferred the Bureau of Navigation and Steamship Inspection Services to it.

#### January 1915

Congress combined the Lifesaving Service (established in June 1878) and Revenue Cutter Service to form the Coast Guard with control remaining in the Treasury Department.

#### April 1917- August 1919

With the Declaration of War against Germany, President Wilson transferred the control of the Coast Guard to the Navy Department by Executive Order and returned the Coast Guard to the control of the Treasury Department at the end of the war.

#### July 1939 - July 1946

In July 1939, Congress placed the U.S. Lighthouse Service under the control of the Coast Guard. At the onset of World War II, President Roosevelt transferred the Coast Guard to the Navy Department. In February 1942, President Roosevelt temporarily transferred the Bureau of Marine Inspection and Navigation (formerly the Bureau of

Navigation and Steamboat Inspection Service) to the Coast Guard, which was still under the Navy Department. After World War II, President Truman returned the control of the Coast Guard to the Treasury Department. In July 1946, pursuant to an Executive Order, the Bureau of Marine Inspection was abolished and became a permanent part of the Coast Guard.

#### April 1967

President Johnson transferred the Coast Guard to the newly formed Department of Transportation.

### **MISSIONS**

The overall mission of the Coast Guard is *the safety of lives and property at sea.*

The Coast Guard's five operating goals: "Safety, Protection of Natural Resources, Mobility, Maritime Security, and National Defense," define the focus of the Service's missions and enable it to touch everyone in the United States.

#### *Safety*

The goal of safety is pursued primarily through search and rescue and marine safety missions.

Like calling 911, Americans expect someone to respond to their calls for help at sea. As search and rescue experts, the Coast Guard is ready to answer those calls with an extensive network of boat and air stations staffed with highly trained crews in all areas of our navigable waterways, from the lakes and rivers to the high seas environs.

Every year, the Coast Guard responds to more than 50,000 calls for assistance, saves thou-

sands of lives, and saves billions of dollars in property.

America's waterways are dangerous places to work and play. In some of our nation's waters, fishing is 20 times more deadly than any other occupation in the country. Recreational boating is second only to highway travel in transportation fatalities.

The Coast Guard's Marine Safety Program promotes safety through inspection, and education, with an emphasis on preventing problems before they occur. A wide-range of regulations provide the authority to ensure U.S. and foreign vessels operating in our waters are structurally sound, competently operated, and outfitted with lifesaving and safety systems. Lessons learned from maritime incidents, accidents, and investigations are used to amend the regulations to create a still safer environment.

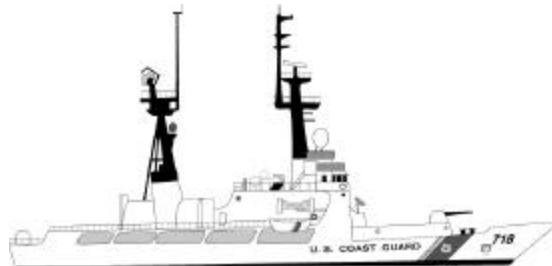
The Coast Guard has entered into partnerships with the private, marine industry to promote the Prevention Through People (PTP) initiative. PTP is an effort to refocus accident prevention using people as the solution, namely how people can increase the level of safety in the marine environment.

In addition to commercial vessels, more than 76 million recreational boaters use our waterways. Our recreational boating safety program is focused on minimizing the loss of life and property and damage to the environment.

The Coast Guard Auxiliary, the 35,000-person civilian volunteer arm of the Coast Guard, is a key contributor to these boating safety efforts and has augmented our missions for over 60 years.

Air stations, small boat stations, and National Strike Force pollution response teams are

strategically located to meet a wide range of response needs. The Coast Guard attempts to rescue any person or ship, regardless of nationality. It provides emergency medical aid to crews of all vessels at sea, and takes injured or critically ill crew members to shore bases for treatment.



### *Protection of Natural Resources*

Through the Protection of Natural Resources goal, the Coast Guard contributes to the national well-being by shielding our ecologically rich and sensitive marine environment.

The fisheries law enforcement program is responsible for enforcing all laws and treaties that affect and protect the \$30 billion commercial and recreational fishing industry.

The Coast Guard has also been a pioneer in the fight against water and environmental pollution. They enforce regulations to prevent the intentional or systemic dumping of plastics, sewage, and other wastes at sea.

The regulation of the shipping industry to prevent or minimize the environmental damage from inadvertent spills is paramount to the protection of natural resources. The Coast Guard's ability to do this was significantly strengthened by the Oil Pollution Act of 1990.

### *Mobility*

The Mobility goal charges the Coast Guard with the facilitation of the movement of people and goods on the U.S. waterways.

The Coast Guard is there, every day, ensuring our waterways remain safe and efficient. Aids to Navigation (AtoN) units maintain the largest aids-to-navigation system in the world with more than 50,000 buoys, fixed markers and lighthouses.

Coast Guard personnel operate precision electronic navigation systems that provide accurate positions in our harbors, waterways and coastal approaches. In our more congested waterways, they also operate Vessel Traffic Services to reduce the risk of collision.

Additionally operational units are tasked with keeping vital domestic shipping lanes open during the winter. On the Great Lakes and rivers, our domestic icebreakers and buoy tenders ensure that ships and supplies are able to move to and from our communities.

### *Maritime Security*

As Guardians of the Sea, the Maritime Security goals outline the Coast Guard's responsibilities as America's principal maritime law enforcement agency. The types of federal laws enforced by the Coast Guard on the high seas and in U.S. waters include criminal laws, revenue and navigation laws, and nautical rules. At-sea enforcement efforts focus on two major mission areas: drug interdiction and illegal alien interdiction.

As a key element in the president's National Drug Control Strategy, the primary goal of the Coast Guard drug interdiction program is to deny drug traffickers maritime routes. To stop the flow of illegal drugs the Coast Guard works closely with domestic law enforcement agencies and foreign governments.

Illegal migrant interdiction is an important and growing law-enforcement and national security concern.

Transit over maritime routes poses grave safety risks to the illegal migrants involved. Economic conditions drive most illegal migration, and organized alien smuggling, especially from Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic and the Peoples Republic of China, has increased dramatically. During the past five years more than 84,000 illegal migrants have been interdicted.

### *National Defense*

The National Defense functions begin in America's ports and extend to distant parts of the world.

Coast Guard National Security roles are based on the president's National Security Strategy and go beyond military operations to include activities that sustain the economic, social, and environmental health of the nation. These missions truly make the Coast Guard a unique instrument of national security.

As one of the five armed services of the United States, the Coast Guard is a full partner with its DoD counterparts. By statute, it operates in the joint arena and function as a specialized service with the Navy in time of conflict.

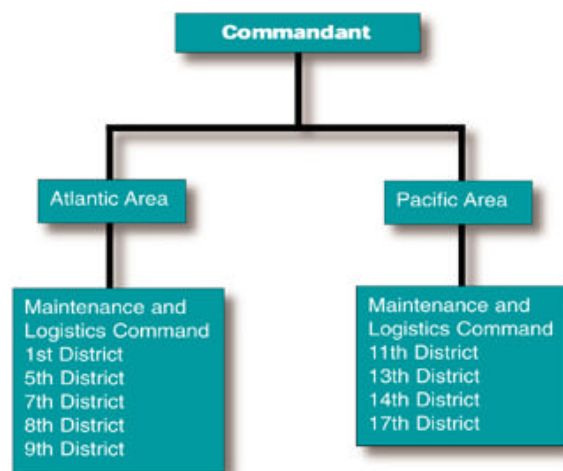
"Specialized" because its wartime roles are logical extensions of its peacetime missions and provide non-redundant and complementary resources. The Coast Guard performs a wide range of naval warfare functions agreed to in a 1995 Memorandum of Agreement between the Secretaries of Defense and Transportation. Those roles include, but are not limited to, Deployed Port Operations, Security and Defense, Maritime

Interception Operations, Environmental Response Operations, and Peacetime Military Engagement.

## ORGANIZATION

The Coast Guard is under the jurisdiction of the Department of Transportation in peacetime, but it is under the control of the U.S. Navy in war-time. Its headquarters is in Washington, DC. A four-star admiral is assigned to head the Coast Guard as Commandant and is responsible to the Secretary of Transportation for activities in nine Coast Guard districts covering the U.S. and its possessions. The Coast Guard, like the other Services, has a regular full-time force and a reserve force that can be called to active duty in case of war or national emergency. Additionally, the Coast Guard is augmented by an Auxiliary force of over 35,000 dedicated civilians who donate their time to promote the safe operation of recreational vessels by conducting courtesy boat inspections and presenting training classes for the boating public. Auxiliary forces also provide the use of their private vessels for patrolling marine parades and regattas. The only compensation provided is reimbursement for fuel consumed during these operations.

Congress created the district system in June 1838. At that time, there were only six districts on the Atlantic coast and two on the Great Lakes. This number has gradually increased as the nation continued to grow with its westward expansion and the acquisition of Alaska and Hawaii. As shown in the organizational chart below, the Coast Guard now has two area commands, the Atlantic Area and the Pacific Area, each with an organic Maintenance and Logistics Command (MLC).



Since 1790, the Coast Guard has grown from a fleet of 10 cutters to an efficient force of vessels and aircraft. Currently, it uses 1,625 vessels, 125 helicopters, and more than 50 long-range aircraft to cover the United States' 10,000 mile coastline. These vessels include 225 cutters, icebreakers, **tenders**, and tugs, as well as over 1,400 **surfboats**, motor lifeboats, patrol boats, and aid to navigation boats. Its aircraft assist in patrol work, law enforcement patrols, and search and rescue missions. Helicopters are particularly important in rescuing disaster victims at sea. During World War II, its aircraft bombed submarines and rescued many survivors of torpedoed ships.

Approximately 200 Coast Guard vessels are armed. The weapons range from machine guns on small patrol vessels to cannons on large cutters. Many vessels also carry antisubmarine weapons. These crews are kept combat ready by training at naval training centers and by participating in joint exercises with the other services of the DoD.

The Coast Guard's training center is at Cape May, New Jersey, where recruits learn discipline and seamanship. Training Centers at Yorktown, Virginia and Alameda, California provide Officer and enlisted technical skills training. All Coast Guard officers receive their training on the

campus of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut.

In addition to the academy, which is similar to the other military academies under the Department of Defense, the Coast Guard Leadership Development Center is co-located on the academy campus. The Leadership Development Center staff conducts the Officer Candidate School, the Chief Warrant Officer Indoctrination Course, the Chief Petty Officer Academy, the Officer-in-Charge School, the Command and Operations School, the Leadership and Quality Institute, and the Unit Leadership Training Program.

## U.S. COAST GUARD ACADEMY

The U.S. Coast Guard Academy (maintained by the Department of Transportation since 1967) is located on the Thames River in New London, Connecticut. It moved to that location in 1932. The academy began with the School of Instruction for the Revenue Marine Service in 1876 when nine cadets started their training aboard the schooner *Dobbin*. Today, it annually commissions approximately 175 ensigns.

The Coast Guard Academy accepts applications from within the Service's enlisted ranks. Acceptance is based on an annual nationwide competition. Additionally, this academy does not accept Congressional appointments, state quotas, or special categories.

## COAST GUARD RESERVES

The Coast Guard Reserve is a military organization that is organized, trained, administered, and supplied under the direction of the command of the Coast Guard. The purpose of the Coast Guard Reserve is to *provide trained and qualified personnel available for active duty in time*

*of war or national emergency and at other times as the national security requires.*

Congress created the Coast Guard Reserve in 1939. This service was composed primarily of boat owners and its mission was to promote boating safety and assist the Coast Guard with the protection of lives and property on navigable waters. In 1941, Congress changed this organization's name to the Coast Guard Auxiliary and established the present Coast Guard Reserve as a military service. Congress then formed the Coast Guard Women's Reserve as a branch of the Coast Guard Reserve in 1942, but abolished it in 1973. From that point on, all female reservists became members of the Coast Guard Reserve.

Today, Coast Guard Reservists serve in virtually all Coast Guard mission areas through augmentation training. Such training is tailored to meet mobilization requirements and represents 65 percent of the total reserve training time. Reservists who perform augmentation training work side-by-side with active duty personnel during drills and periods of annual training. These reservists have proven their ability to extend and expand the capability of the Coast Guard. They are a valuable part of the Total Force, being available to respond to domestic emergencies as well as wartime situations.

## RESERVE CATEGORIES

The Coast Guard Reserve has three major reserve categories: Ready Reserve, Standby Reserve, and Retired Reserve.

### *Ready Reserve*

The Ready Reserve consists of the Selected Reserve and Individual Ready Reserve.

- The Selected Reserve consists of individual reservists serving on paid inactive duty training (IDT). Members are in a drill status, that is, they must attend 48 IDT drills and 14 days of active duty training per year. These reservists are assigned to active duty commands, and they have the highest priority among reservists for mobilization. This priority necessitates training throughout the year to ensure the highest individual readiness.
- The Individual Ready Reserve consists of unpaid reservists who, for the most part, have completed their required active duty obligation. They remain on reserve rolls to complete their military obligation, and they are obligated to maintain physical standards. They may also voluntarily participate in reserve training programs without pay.

### *Standby Reserve*

The Standby Reserve consists of reservists who are liable for mobilization only in time of war or national emergency declared by Congress. The Commandant may order these reservists to active duty if the Ready Reserve force is insufficient to meet mobilization requirements. The Standby Reserve has two sub-categories, Active Status and Inactive Status.

- Standby Reserve (Active Status). In this category, reservists may earn retirement points and compete for promotion, but may not receive pay. The Coast Guard may assign officers or enlisted personnel to this category if they still have a military obligation to fulfill.
- Standby Reserve (Inactive Status). In this category, members may not earn retirement points, compete for promotion, or receive pay. Reservists are placed in this category for a number of reasons, including:

- ✓ Officers who have been twice non-selected for promotion.
- ✓ Officers who have failed to earn the minimum retirement points for a year.
- ✓ Officers or enlisted reservists who have exceeded their maximum allowable weight standard at the end of a probationary period.

### *Retired Reserve*

The Retired Reserve consists of reservists who meet satisfactory service requirements, age criteria, and who request transfer to retired status. In this status, members may not perform training or earn retirement points, but the Commandant may order them to active duty in the event of war or a national emergency if the Ready Reserve force is insufficient to meet mobilization requirements.

## **TRADITION**

For probably as long as anyone can remember, “*Semper Paratus*” has been a Revenue Cutter Service and Coast Guard watchword. The words themselves, “always ready” or “ever ready,” date back to ancient times. However, no official recognition was given to this motto until it appeared in 1910 on the **ensign** of the Revenue cutters. Captain Francis Van Boskerck — who wrote the words and music to the march, “*Semper Paratus*” — hoped to give it as much recognition as “*Semper Fideles*” of the Marine Corps and “*Anchors Aweigh*” of the Navy.



The Coast Guard emblem was adopted in 1927, at which time, the seal and emblem were one in the same. A civilian Coast Guard draftsman, Oscar H. Kee, designed this seal/ emblem. This emblem now stands as a visual identifier for the Coast Guard. Not only is it on the Coast Guard ensign, it also appears inside the distinctive slash on its cutters, craft, aircraft, and on medals and plaques. Blue and white are the Coast Guard's official colors.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

The Coast Guard, during an average day, will:

- board 90 large vessels for port safety checks
- process 120 seaman's documents
- seize 209 pounds of marijuana and 170 pounds of cocaine worth \$9.2 million
- conduct 120 law enforcement boardings
- investigate 17 marine accidents
- inspect 64 commercial vessels
- save 14 lives
- assist 328 people in distress
- save \$2,490,000 in property
- service 150 aids to navigation
- interdict 176 illegal migrants



## THE U.S. MERCHANT MARINE



### INTRODUCTION AND MISSIONS

The Merchant Marine is a fleet made up of a nation's commercial ships, both cargo and passenger, and those who operate them. It carries a nation's commerce (imports and exports) during peacetime and becomes a naval auxiliary during wartime to deliver troops and material.

According to the *Merchant Marine Act* of 1936, "It is necessary for the national defense...that the United States shall have a merchant marine of the best equipped and most suitable types of vessels sufficient to carry the greater portion of its commerce and serve as a naval or military auxiliary in time of war or national emergency...and should be operated by highly trained and efficient citizens of the United States and that the U.S. Navy and the Merchant Marine should work closely to promote the maximum integration of the total sea power forces of the United States...."

### BACKGROUND

Considered the nation's first navy, the Merchant Marine helped to defeat the British Navy to gain America's independence. Since then, it has served in all of our country's wars.

### AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR

The 13 American colonies, after declaring their independence from Britain, had only 31 ships in the Continental Navy at the onset of the American Revolutionary War, and a total of 64 ships at the height of that war. To add to this number, the government issued **Letters of Marque** to privately owned, armed merchant ships and commissions for **privateers**, which the government outfitted as warships to prey on British merchant ships. During the Revolution, the privateers had almost 1,700 ships, a total of 14,872 guns (cannons), and they captured 2,283 enemy ships. In comparison, the ships in the Continental Navy had a total of 1,246 guns (cannons) and they captured 196 enemy ships.

The incident that is considered to be the first sea engagement of the Revolutionary War, and the beginning of the Merchant Marine's war role, took place on June 12, 1775. A party of mariners, armed with guns, swords, axes, and pitchforks, inspired by the news of the recent victory at Lexington, Massachusetts, used an unarmed lumber schooner to surprise and capture a fully armed British warship off the coast of Maine. These mariners used the seized guns and ammunition to capture additional British ships throughout the war.

### WAR OF 1812

By 1800, America's merchant fleet ranked second in the world behind the British fleet. In 1812, however, the United States went to war with Britain because of incidents involving the Merchant Marine fleet. The United States accused the British of seizing American ships on the high seas and forcing seamen to join the British navy. Additionally, Britain seized vessels bound for

Europe that did not first call at a British port. France retaliated by confiscating vessels if they had stopped first in Britain. Together, both nations seized nearly 1,500 American vessels between 1803 and 1812.

Since America had almost no navy, it had to fight the War of 1812 using mainly merchant ships — as it did in the Revolutionary War. (Recall that the Continental Navy discontinued operations after the Revolutionary War and sold its last war-ship in 1785. It remained disbanded until the launching of the *United States* in 1797, which marked the rebirth of the U.S. Navy.)

With the battle cry of “*free trade and sailors’ rights*” in the War of 1812, the privateers had 517 ships, a total of 2,893 guns, and they captured 1,300 enemy ships. In contrast, the 23 ships in the U.S. Navy had a total of 556 guns and they captured 254 enemy ships.

During the Revolutionary War and War of 1812, the privateer had to be bold and daring in order to survive and to realize financial rewards. For example, the *Paul Jones* left New York in 1812 with 120 men but only three guns, although she was pierced for 17. Before she met the British merchant ship *Hassan*, which carried 14 guns and a crew of 20, her master had short lengths of timber painted black, mounted them on buckets, and filled her rigging with his men. Intimidated, the *Hassan* immediately surrendered and the *Paul Jones* was able to fill her gun mounts with real guns.

## THE WORLD WARS

Prior to America’s entry into World War I, Congress created the United States Shipping Board in 1916. In support of the war effort, the United States took steps to build a “bridge of ships” across the Atlantic. In so doing, the United

States allowed American ships flying under foreign flags to reregister under the American flag. By 1917, the U.S. Shipping Board had 162 shipyards, most of them new, building 3,370 ships at a contract price of \$3 billion.

In 1938, when a second World War was imminent, President Roosevelt realized that winning the war would require many ships to carry war supplies to the fronts. He ordered mass-production of **Liberty Ships** and established the U.S. Maritime Service to train the men needed to operate these ships.

According to the *Merchant Marine Act* of 1936, “The Secretary may establish and maintain a voluntary organization for the training of U.S. citizens to serve on Merchant Marine vessels of the U.S. and to be known as the U.S. Maritime Service...and to prescribe the uniform of such service and the rules governing the wearing and furnishing of such uniform...The ranks, grades, and ratings for personnel of the U.S. Maritime Service shall be the same as...for the personnel of the U.S. Coast Guard.”

### DID YOU KNOW?

Joseph P. Kennedy (father of President John F. Kennedy) was appointed as the first chairman of the Federal Maritime Commission in 1937 during which he laid the groundwork for the U.S. Merchant Marine.

During World War II, the government nationalized the Merchant Marine fleet, that is, the government controlled the cargo and the destinations, contracted with private companies to operate the ships, and put guns and Navy personnel (Armed Guards) on board. The government trained the men to operate these ships through the U.S. Maritime Service.

To prevent low-level attacks by enemy aircraft, the vessels under the Maritime Service used **barrage balloons** (or “Bulging Berthas”) that were attached on deck and floated above the ships. These inflatable shiny silver-painted balloons, which were made of rubber-coated fabric, were filled with hydrogen gas and flown at 500 feet when the ship traveled in dangerous waters, but were raised to 2000 feet when under attack. At that height, the 15 gauge flying wire could clip the wings off a plane. However, in winds greater than 25 miles per hour, the ship used kites.

Unfortunately, the Merchant Marine suffered more casualties (as a percent or ratio of the number killed to the number who served) than any other branch of Service. With 215,000 officially serving and 6,795 killed in action, the result is a ratio of one Merchant Marine killed to every 32 who served (or 1 in 32). In contrast, the Marine Corps had a ratio of 1 in 34, the Army had 1 in 48, the Navy had 1 in 114, and the Coast Guard had a ratio of 1 in 421.

### DID YOU KNOW?

The size of a nation's merchant marine is measured by its **gross tonnage**, rather than by the number of ships. Gross tonnage is the total space within the hull and enclosed deck space on a ship. Each 100 cubic feet of ship space equals one gross ton.

On the other hand, the enemy never captured any U.S. merchant ships as a prize during World War II. Navy instructions to American shipmasters were: “It is the policy of the U.S. government that no U.S. flag merchant ship be permitted to fall into enemy hands. The ship shall be defended by her armament, by maneuver, and by

every available means as long as possible. When in the judgment of the Master that capture is inevitable, provision should be made to open sea valves and to flood holds and compartments adjacent to machinery spaces, start numerous fires, and employ any additional measures available to insure certain **scuttling** of the vessel.”

### WORLD WAR II TO PRESENT

Since 1950, the Maritime Administration (an agency of the Department of Commerce) has promoted a strong and efficient U.S. Merchant Marine. This agency administers programs to assure that the Merchant Marine is capable of meeting the nation's shipping demands in times of peace and of providing support to the armed forces in times of national emergencies.

For example, it awards **subsidies** to U.S. firms to help build and operate merchant ships used in foreign trade. These payments help companies to compete with foreign firms that have lower costs. The agency also insures mortgages and loans made by private lending institutions for the building or reconstructing of ships. However, increased foreign competition in this industry has hurt our merchant marine. Because of corporate income taxes, insurance rates, shipbuilding costs, and labor costs, U.S. flagships move only about seven percent of our total ocean commerce; we use foreign-flag vessels to handle the remainder.

The Department of Defense actively supports programs to update the U.S. Merchant Marine. The Navy and the Department of Commerce have cooperated in the development of the world's fastest cargo firefighters. They are conducting research on a cargo-carrying surface-effect vessel and a cargo submarine. The Military Sealift Command and the maritime industry work together to ensure that U.S. merchant ships are available to the

Department of Defense when needed. Such ships carried 97 percent of the logistic support required by our military forces in Vietnam.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

“Since I became Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I have come to appreciate first-hand why our Merchant Marine has long been called our nation’s ‘fourth arm of defense.’ The American seafarer provides an essential service to the well-being of the nation as was demonstrated so clearly during Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm .... We are a maritime nation. We must be able to project power across the seas. This means that not only do we need a strong Navy, but a strong maritime industry as well.” *General Colin Powell*

## **U.S. MERCHANT MARINE ACADEMY**

The U.S. Merchant Marine Academy was established in 1938 as a result of the *Merchant Marine Act* of 1936. It operates under the U.S. Maritime Administration, an agency that since 1967 has been under the Department of Transportation.

In 1949, the academy became fully accredited. The academy occupies 65 acres on the north shore of Long Island at Kings Point, NY. It became a permanent, government-sponsored school in 1956 and received equal status with the other Service academies of the U.S. Armed Forces.

## **RESERVES**

The U.S. Merchant Marine Reserve is a component of the U.S. Naval Reserve community and is made up of licensed deck and engineering

officers. Congress created this Reserve to ensure that the Merchant Marine can operate efficiently with the U.S. Navy in times of national emergency.

The Department of Naval Science at the California Maritime Academy is responsible for providing students the training to become officers in the Reserve. The Department of Naval Science can provide partial tuition assistance each year and a commission as an officer in the active or inactive U.S. Naval Reserve.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

“[The Merchant Marine] has written one of its most brilliant chapters. It has delivered goods when and where needed in every theater of operations and across every ocean in the biggest, most difficult and dangerous job ever undertaken. As time goes on, there will be greater public understanding of our merchant’s fleet record during this war [WWII].” *President Roosevelt*

There are specific eligibility requirements that students must meet before the California Maritime Academy can accept their enrollment into this program (such as U.S. citizenship, age, physical ability, aptitude for Naval service, and concurrent acceptance in the Naval Reserve). In addition, the student incurs several post graduate obligations depending on the student’s receipt of an inactive duty commission as an ensign in the Merchant Marine Reserve or an active duty commission in one of three U.S. Navy Warfare areas (surface warfare, aviation, or nuclear power).

## **TRADITION**

In 1943, a Maritime Hymn was composed by Buddy Clarke and Rudy Melnik, but the official song of the U.S. Merchant Marine is “*Heave Ho, My Lad!*”

Although a part of their name, people serving in the Merchant Marine are never called marines; they are called mariners, seaman, seafarers, or sailors.

When a mariner dies, he or she is said to have “*crossed the bar.*” This phrase has its origin in the fact that most rivers and bays develop a sandbar across their entrances, and “crossing the bar” meant leaving the safety of the harbor for the unknown. “Crossing The Bar” is also a poem written by Alfred Lord Tennyson. Upon request, and the availability of a Coast Guard unit, the ashes of a mariner veteran may be spread at sea.

## CONCLUSION

This chapter introduced you to the history, missions, and organization — including the reserve forces or components — of the Department of Defense, Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Merchant Marine. Each of these play an important yet distinct role in our nation’s defense capabilities. The U.S. Armed Forces as a combined arms force must be trained and maintained at high standards to ensure they are capable — individually and collectively — of preserving the peace and the security of the United States.